

Exhibit No. 14
Date 1-28-2009
Bill No. SB 233**1. From:** Birk, Dawn (IHS/BIL)**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2009 1:14 PM**To:** 'brown.roy@bresnan.net'**Subject:** SB 233 Prescription Privileges for Psychologists

Dear Chairman Brown, Vice-Chairman Murphy and Honorable Senators

I am writing to you regarding important issues regarding SB 233. Please share the following as you feel appropriate. I am a practicing psychologist and I am concerned about the way in which proponents of SB 233 have presented the bill. I am also uncomfortable with how they are currently planning to carry out training for psychologists who are to be designated as having prescriptive authority.

I served as a member of the Board of Psychologists for 4 years. The Board deals with many complex psychological issues in order to protect the public. The minority of psychologists from Montana who happen to belong to the Montana Psychological Association has chosen to take up the prescription issue for about 15 years. Just from the standpoint of competent administration of the practice of medicine (which is really what is being proposed) the Board of Psychologists will be forced to alter their entire operation. The cost of having psychologists who obtain prescription privileges is extremely concerning. It will force the Board of Psychologists, whose presence is required in this state to protect the welfare of the public, to formulate an assessment process to determine whether particular psychologists are qualified to practice in the state. This would include requiring some Board members to have the training and background to assess psychologists, developing an examination, changing laws regarding the practice of psychology and hiring legal counsel to assist in this. Additionally, it is very probable that there will be an increase in complaints to the Board of Psychologists that are associated with psychologists prescribing medications to their clients. The Board would have to cope with these and have legal counsel for this as well. All of this adds up to a great deal of money. Who will pay for this and should those who don't have prescription privileges be handled differently? This move would also likely significantly impact liability insurance for psychologists in Montana. I don't believe that the proponents have fully considered all of the costs involved.

I appreciate your time and attention to my concerns.

Sincerely,

Dawn Birk, Ph.D.